GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1149
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2016
Employees of MTNL
Patil Shri A.T. (Nana)

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to announce Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for the employees of Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL);

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the eligibility criteria fixed for the purpose; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to improve the financial situation of the BSNL and MTNL that have posted massive losses during the last several years?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) & (b) At present, there is no proposal under consideration of Department of Telecommunications (DoT) for the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) for employees of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL).

(c) BSNL and MTNL are taking several steps to enhance revenues through investments to strengthen their network and focus on customer care and service delivery to improve revenue generation. Some of these are as follows:

BSNL

â€¢ BSNL has planned to install 10510 of 3G Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) & 14232 of 2G BTSs under Phase-VII GSM (Global System for Mobile communication) expansion for 15 Million lines. It has also planned to install additional 9600 of 3G BTSs and replacing of 5300 old BTSs of GSM Phase I, II & III in North & South Zone. An approximate capacity of 5 million shall be added in the GSM network of North Zone & South Zone. BSNL has already commissioned over 16.42 million lines. Out of the planned BTSs, 9829 (3G) BTSs & 12,491 (2G) BTSs are radiating (Total 22,320). This will improve 2G & 3G network coverage & data capability of 3G network.
â€¢ BSNL has planned to implement ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) as one of the important IT initiative in two phases i.e. Phase-I Proof of Concept (POC) and Phase-2 Rollout. The ERP has been implemented in all the 49 units including eight Proof of Concept (POC) Circles .
â€¢ During this Five Year Plan (2012-17), BSNL has planned to make the entire wire line customer base network IP enabled. Next Generation Network (NGN) equipment based on the latest architecture are planned to be deployed gradually to replace the entire Circuit Switched equipments/ Digital Telephone Exchanges.
â€¢ BSNL has set wireline call centres for the customers of landline and broadband at Dehradun, Ajmer and Bangalore and traffic from all circles has been migrated to these call centres. These call centres are accessible through toll free number 1500 (from BSNL number) and 18003451500 (from other operator numbers).
â€¢ BSNL has launched various customer centric initiatives like Night free calling, Free Roaming, increased minimum speed of broadband to 2 Mbps etc.

MTNL

â€¢ MTNL has planned to upgrade the existing High Speed Downlink Packet Access (HSDPA) 3G network supporting Downlink speed of 3.6 Mbps & Uplink speed of 384 Kbps to HSPA+ (High Speed Packet Access +) with Downlink speed of 21.1 Mbps & Uplink speed of 5.76 Mbps per sector.
â€¢ MTNL is taking steps for up-gradation / augmentation / expansion of existing 2G/3G network.
â€¢ MTNL is planning to provide the backhaul media connectivity of existing mobile tower sites in Delhi & Mumbai on OFC network in place of Microwave network.
â€¢ MTNL is also exploring synergy with BSNL for its mobile services amongst other initiatives.
â€¢ MTNL has set up wireline call centers for the customers of landline, mobile & broadband at Delhi and Mumbai. These call centers are accessible through Toll Free numbers 1500/1503/1504 (from MTNL numbers). These call centres handle all types of inbound queries, directory enquiries, complaints, requests, outbound calling and response through SMS (Short Message service)/e-mail/fax/web portal.

In addition, Department of Telecommunication (DoT) has also taken up several projects to improve the telecom network in rural and remote areas through Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF). Some of these projects are as follows:

â€¢ To provide better mobile services in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas, USOF has awarded to BSNL to install 2199 (BTSs).
â€¢ USOF is implementing a comprehensive telecom developing plan for the North East Region (NER) at the estimated cost of Rs.5336.18 crores. This NER scheme has following components:
(i) Provision of mobile services in uncovered villages.
(ii) Provision of seamless mobile coverage along the National Highways.
(iii) Augmentation of Transmission media.
â€¢ USOF is augmenting the telecom network in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands.
â€¢ National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) is being implemented to connect 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats with broadband.